

Archaeological Site of Chechar and its Identification

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Situated on the northern bank of the Ganges about 15 kilometres to the east of Hājipur the Buddhist site of Chechar is of great historical and archaeological significance. The ancient relics are scattered along with the river in the villages of Amer, Madhurapur, Kunabpur, Bidupur, Gopalpur, Saidpur, Bajitpur and Chechar etc., in a vast area and the archaeological complex of the site is collectively known from the last mentioned village (i.e. Chechar).

Chechar is a chalcolithic site and the discovery of the sherds of black-and-red ware of early types and fabrics and early tools of animal bones and horns and also of stones, suggests that the place might have come under occupation sometime about c. 1600 B.C., if not earlier still. The sherds of dish on-stand of black-and-red ware discovered from site show that the early settlements of Chechar are not far removed in date from the earliest habitations of Chirand (Saran district) and Sonapur (Gaya district) in Bihar. The N. B. P. Ware (c. 600 B.C.-150 B. C.) settlements of Chechar are very rich and the earliest brick structures are datable to this period. The brick structures of N. B. P. and post-N. B. P. periods are hanging over the eroded bed of Ganges in a vast area in several miles. The exposed brick structures, ring-wells, drains and pavements etc., present a clear picture of the construction of houses, dimensions of rooms, thickness of walls and the size of bricks of different periods. Early terracotta human and animal figurines, seals and sealings, silver and copper punch-marked coins, Kusāṇa gold and copper coins, Gupta gold and silver coins and other antiquities such as stots and terracotta beads, ivory styli, bone arrow-heads, copper antimony rods and various other objects of stone, bone, ivory and copper now preserved in the private collections of Shri Kamupakar Singh, Ram Chhabila Singh and Mundrika Singh of Chechar suggest that the place must have enjoyed an important position from the pre-Mauryan times down to the post-Gupta

period.¹ Two interesting terracotta sealings bearing the legend *Kanika* i.e. of *Kanika* (a personal name) and *Shagwasa*, i.e. of *Shagan* (a personal name) in Brahmi characters of about 2nd-3rd century B. C. were found in the above collection.²

The Chechar complex was an important urban settlement or township during the Maurya, Sunga, Kushana and the Gupta periods. The great varieties of early Indian and foreign coins, seals and sealings and terracotta figurines showing Indian and foreign faces, discovered from the site in question show that it was an important city of political and religious significance and trade centre of Transindus (modern Panna in South Bihar).

The archaeological site of Chechar has now attracted the attention of the amateur archaeologists, antiquity dealers and such other interested persons and parties and some haphazard notes have appeared on the pages of the daily newspapers and weeklies such as the *Hydara*, *Dinmanch*,³ and *Udyan* etc., and a booklet entitled *Sarapura ki Khajuri Awa Uska Kithara*, and a short note entitled 'Paper on identification of Cho-Po-Ho-Lo and its Master A-Lo-Na-Shuen' (A. D. 647-48), have been published by Y. Mishra in the proceedings of the Bihararchaeology Section of the Indian History Congress.⁴

- 1 In course of the author's visit of Chechar an interesting stone seal bearing the representation of V-shaped monogram with the inscription *Rakha* (a personal name) in the Brahmi character of the 2nd-3rd century A.D. was found in the possession of Ram Chuhila Singh of Chechar.
- 2 Four silver punch-marked coins, two cast copper coins, a silver coin of the Indo-Greek king Herakles and other minor antiquities such as ivory eyes, copper antimony rod etc., were found in the possession of Shri Ram Kumar Singh and Raj Kumar Singh (of the same village) and the author is very much thankful to them. The author's thanks are also due to Shri Ram Paker Singh for bringing the site of Chechar to the notice of the author. The coins are under publication.
- 3 See *Dinmanch* (weekly Hindi), 6-12 Nov., 1977, pp. 40 B.
- 4 The coins of Chechar illustrated by Mishra in the *Dinmanch* (weekly, 6-12 Nov., 1977) and also in the booklet entitled *Sarapura ki Khajuri Awa Uska Kithara* are wrongly labelled as *cho-po-ho-lo*. Some of the coins illustrated by him are evidently cast coins and not *cho-po-ho-lo* (struck or punched). Mishra has also published another booklet entitled 'Sarapura ki Khajuri' in Hindi. For pointed black and red ware pot-sherds and a terracotta shagwasa, see plate I.

Mishra has tried to reconstruct the history of *Svetapura* on the basis of his hypothesis and wrongly identifies the ancient site of *Chechar* with the place called *Cha-pao-ho-lo* known from the medieval Chinese accounts of Wang-Hsien-tse's invasion of India. It is also wrongly believed by him that the present site (of *Chechar*) is the same as *Sui-fu-to-po-to* (i. e. in Skt. as *Svetapura*) referred to by Hsien-tsang. Mishra's contention that *Chechar* was the capital of the so-called Maurya king *A-to-na-shuen* or *O-lo-na-shuen* (Skt. *Arugala* 647-649 A. D.) of *Ti-na-hsi* or *Ti-shih-ku* (modern *Tibet* in north Bihar) and the *Pala* (970-1097 A. D.), are doubtful. The recent explorations and excavations carried out by the Mid-Eastern Circle of the Archaeological Survey of India show no sign of the capital city of the so-called Maurya king *Arugala* and the *Pala* of Bengal and Bihar. Post-Gupta and *Pala* remains at *Chechar* are negligible and the site in question does not seem to be the capital of the so-called Maurya king *Arugala* and the *Pala* rulers.

It is well known from the Chinese accounts of Wang-Hsien-tse's invasion of India that *Cha-pao-ho-lo*, the capital city of king *O-lo-na-shuen* (or *Arugala*) of *Ti-na-hsi* (or *Ti-shih-ku*) was situated on the river *Chien-to-Wel* (or *Gaggha*). The present site of *Chechar* is located on the lower stream of the Ganges far to the east (about 12 miles) from the confluence of *Gaggha* and *Gaggha* and hence the site in question cannot be identified with the place called *Cha-pao-ho-lo*, the capital of *O-lo-na-shuen* (or *Arugala*). *Cha-pao-ho-lo* was probably located somewhere in the Nepalese *Tarai* not far away from the mouth of the said river.

The death of Harsha towards the end of 647 or the beginning of 648 (A. D.) was followed by an anarchy and confusion and the succession of the imperial throne was claimed by one of his ministers who evidently held sway in north Bihar whose name is given in the Chinese texts as *Na-hsi-O-lo-na-shuen* or *Arugala* of *Ti-shih-ku*. According to the tradition preserved in the Chinese records, *Arugala* attacked a Chinese mission of Wang-Hsien-tse sent by the Chinese emperor to Harsha. The reasons of attack and massacre of the members of the Chinese mission by *Arugala* are not known. In the attack launched by *Arugala* most of the members of the mission were killed

but Wang-Huen-tse saved his life and fled away to Nepal. He collected 7000 soldiers from Nepal and 1200 (or 1000) from Tibet and launched an attack on Arughya. Arughya was defeated and was taken captive to China. According to the story preserved in the Chinese text, Wang-Huen-tse visited India four times and has himself left an account of his travels which is preserved in the *Fa-ssu-chu-lia* (compiled by Tao-chien in 668 A. D.).⁵ The details of his travels are also mentioned in the *Xiu History of the Tang Dynasty* of which two versions are available.⁶ According to these just after the death of Chilo-i-to (Śiṣaditya) Harsha, there was complete anarchy in the country and his minister Olo-nashun occupied the throne and proclaimed himself as an independent monarch. He sent his barbarian forces to drive out the Chinese mission of Wang-Huen-tse. The latter had only thirty horsemen as an escort. In the attack launched by Olo-nashun most of the members of the mission were killed; but Wang-Huen-tse escaped and fled to Tufan (Tibet). He collected 1200 picked soldiers and 7000 Nepalese cavalry. Wang-Huen-tse was assisted by Tsiang-Chen-jen, the second officer of the embassy and after three days battle Olo-nashun (Arughya) was defeated. He fled and his capital city of Cha-pu-ho-i was captured. He reorganised his forces and fought again; but was caught and taken captive to China. Tsiang-Chen-jen is said to have captured about 580 walled towns of India and received supplies for his victorious army from Olo-kia-mo (or Śri-Kumara Bhāṣkaravarman) of Kia-mo-ho or Kāmasūpa (Assam). King Chikienanaya presents to the Chinese general are stated to have included 30,000 oxen and horses and considerable war material and it is further stated that the said king of Kia-mo-ho (or Kāmasūpa) presented to the Chinese emperor some curious articles including a map of the country. The whole episode took place in the year 648 A. D. The captive Indian king O-lo-nashun (Arughya) remained in China till he died there.⁷ The scholars doubt the historical truth of the Chinese story.

5 *JA*, 1900, p. 297 ff.

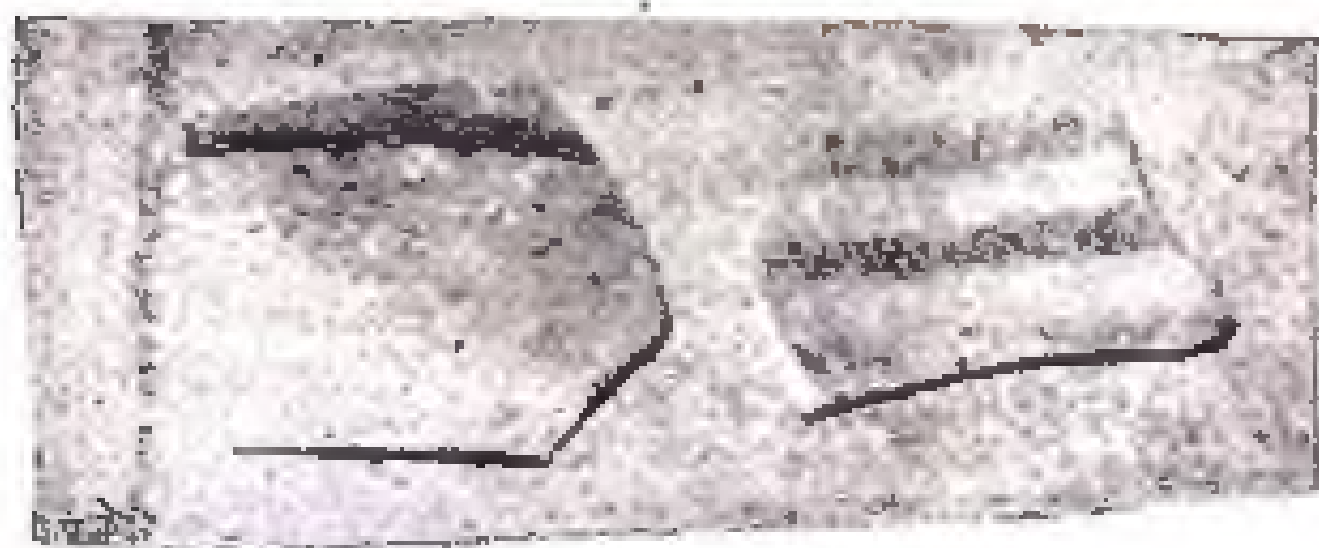
6 These have been translated by Lévi (see *ibid.*, pp. 206 ff.) and Waddell, *JAHR*, pp. 57 ff.

7 *JA*, Vol. XI, p. 20. For details of Wang-Huen-tse's Indian campaign see *JAHR*, *Levi*, Vol. XIX, 1233, p. 30; *Sircar, Indian Epigraphy*, p. 292 ff.

The Chinese Annals, whatever truth is there in them, show that the usurping Harsha's minister was a local ruler of Tirhut, probably a Governor who proclaimed himself as an independent monarch after Harsha's death. By this time the Tibetan King Srong-tsan Gampo had entered into the political arena of India and Wang Hsien-tse's campaign of India is regarded by some scholars as merely a part of Indian campaign of the Tibetan king.⁸ Somewhere in between 583 and 630 A.D. an obscure chief named Srong Tsan, united the scattered hill tribes and founded a powerful kingdom in Tibet. He had a large army and led a victorious campaign to central India; but the history of his conquest is not definitely known. Srong Tsan was succeeded by his son named Srong Tsan Gampo⁹ who is said to have conquered Assam and

- 8 According to Hsien-tsang Harsha ruled for 36 years (Watters, on *Yuan Chwang's Travels in India*, Vol. 2, p. 343). We find two dates given for the death of King Śīladitya (Harsha), Chinese history placing it in the year A.D. 648 and the *Life* (of Hsien-Tsang by Hsueh-Li) to 645. Taking 36 years as the duration of his reign, we thus have 612 or 619 as the date of his accession. The latter date agrees with a Chinese statement that the troubles in India which led to Śīladitya's reign took place in the reign of T'ang Kao Tsu (A.D. 618 to 627). But the date 648, or rather 647, is perhaps the correct one. It must have been in 641 or 642 that he had been sovereign for about thirty years. This also gives 612 for the year of his accession, and the addition of six years to the thirty gives 648 as the date of his death. But the Chinese envoy despatched in the early part of that year found on his arrival in the country, the King dead and a usurper on the throne. Moreover, it was in 648 that Yuan Chwang submitted his records to T'ai Tsung and Śīladitya must have been dead before this work was drawn up in its present form. Watters, *op. cit.*, pp. 346-47; cf. Stein, *op. cit.*, pp. 291 f.; see also (Arjun or Arughava) a King of Tirahbukt; see also *Sino-Indian Studies*, Vol. I, p. 49; Waddell suggested that the capital city of Arughava or Arjuna was the same as that of the Valga (or Vahala) see *IAQR*, 1911, pp. 338 and 339.
- 9 *IASR*, Letters, Vol. XIX, p. 42.

- 10 The Tibetan *Lodag-pag-drubka* which gives an account of Srong's conquest makes no mention of his Indian expeditions or even intervention in the Indian political affairs, see L. Petech, *A Study of the Chronicle of Ladakh*, pp. 538ff.; cf. Chandra, *op. cit.*, p. 214.



Painted Black-and-Red Ware pot-stands and a *straw*
edge-hood from Chechu (p. 192)

Nepal and exercised suzerainty over half of *Jadubalapa*; but whether he actually conquered any part of the Indian territory is not known.¹¹ It may be noted in this connection that Srong Tsan Gampo's campaign was limited to a very narrow region along the foot hills of the Himalayas and extending into the plains of north Bihar of which Arunāsiva was formerly a governor and later an independent ruler after Harya's death. The Chinese accounts of the Tibetan conquest of central India is misleading and there is no historical truth in it. *Chap-wu-ho-lo*, the capital of O-lo-na-shun (Arunāsiva) was probably not far away from the foot hills of the Himalayas somewhere in the Nepalese Tarai and the Chinese attack of Wong-Hien-tse was limited to a very narrow region of north Bihar and does not seem to have extended upto the present site of Chetkar near Patliputra (Paua).

It is worthy of note that the city of *Fo-to-po-lo* (or *Buddhapura*) wrongly taken as *Shih-to-to-po-lo* (or *Svetapura*)¹² by many scholars and the monastery of the same name has not been properly identified.

From the testimony of Hsien-tsang's accounts we know that the city was situated about 90 *li* (or 15 miles) to the south of *Vaishali* from the site of a great *stupa* where the second Buddhist council was held. The place (the site of the second Buddhist Council) was located at a distance of about 14 or 15 *li* (or 2½ miles) to the south of *Vaishali*. At present there is no trace of the

11 The Tibetan conquest of central India is misleading and scholars doubt the historical value of the Chinese story, see Majumdar, *History of Bengal*, Vol. I, p. 93. Tibetan historians give various dates of birth of Srong Tsan Gampo ranging between 600 and 617 A.D. (*JASO*, Vol. L, p. 218). Patchi believes that he was born in 589 A.D. and reigned from 620 to 650 A.D. (*IRI*, Vol. XV, pp. 218, 2). Loh (*Asiatic*, Vol. II, p. 173) and Thomas (*Literary Texts*, p. 49) suggest that he died in 630, the latter assigning him the date between 620 and 630 A.D. Francke (*Antiquities of Tibet*, pt. II, pp. 92-94) also holds similar view and places him in between 600 and 650 A.D.

12 The city of *Fo-to-po-lo* (or *Buddhapura*) and the monastery of the same name (i.e. *Buddhapura Saṅghārāma*) is referred to by Hsien-tsang. The French scholar Julien, who translated the Chinese text restored the name *Fo-to-po-lo* as *Shih-to-to-po-lo* (Skt. *Svetapura*). Although Wadda accepts Julien's restoration (see Wadda, *op. cit.*, Vol. II, pp. 798); but scholars doubt.

map, but a place 2½ miles to the south east of the village of Basadi (ancient Vaidā) is believed to be the site of the second Buddhist Council. The details of the celebrated Buddhist pilgrim Hsuan-tsang show that after walking a distance of 30 li (or 15 miles) from the place of the second Buddhist Council, the pilgrim came to the site of the monastery of Fei-to-po-lo or Buddhapura (wrongly believed as Shih-fei-to-po-lo or Sveta-pura) which was situated by the side of a *mapa* built by Asoka. It is worthy of note that the Chinese pilgrim after walking further a distance of 30 li (or 5 miles) to the south of Fei-to-po-lo monastery (or Buddhapura Saṅghaśrama) he came to the bank of the Ganges and saw two *stūpas* built on the corporeal relics of Ānanda, one each on either bank (northern and southern) of the said river (near Pāṭaliputra). Ānanda, the great disciple of Buddha had entered into nirvāṇa in the Ganges near Pāṭaliputra and his corporeal relics were equally distributed among the Lichchhavis of Vaidā and King Ajātasattu of Magadha and both the claimants had constructed a *stūpa* in their respective territories on the either bank (northern and southern) of the Ganges facing each other. Fa-Hsuan had also visited the place and had seen both the relic *stūpas* of Ānanda at the confluence of five rivers probably Ganges, Gandak, Son, Punpun and Mahi.¹³ Thus the above accounts show that the monastery of Fei-to-po-lo (or Buddhapura) was situated at a distance of 30 li (or 5 miles) to the north of the Ganges. The distance and description of the city and the monastery of Fei-to-po-lo (wrongly taken as Shih-fei-to-po-lo) do not correspond with the present situation of Ghazipur and there is also no substantial archaeological evidence to justify the identification of the site under discussion with so-called Sveta-pura. The location of the confluence of five rivers and the sites of the

13 In the Pāli literature the river is called Mahāmāhi. In the Saṃbuddha-Sutta of Gaṅgā, Yamunā, Aśikaravati, Saradhā and Mahi. We know from Dhaniya-Sutta of the river Mahi (मही नदी). It is stated that the King was restless and the sky was covered with dark rain clouds. Looking towards the clouds, Buddha had said, 'Deva, rain as much as you wish' (उत्तराय). The *Agguttara-Nikāya* (IV, p. 101) and *Mahāvaṃsa* (Buddhist University Press, p. 73) also refer to this river, see E. C. Law, *Indological Studies*, pt. III, p. 132.

relic *stūpas* of Ananda cannot be determined at the present state of our knowledge as the river Purnpun now flows far to the east of the present influence of the Ganges and Gandak and falls in the former near Patwah. The river Son has also changed its old bed and now merges with the Ganges near Maner about 22 miles to the west of Patna (ancient Pataliputra).

The river Ganges has already washed away a considerable portion of the ancient remains of Pataliputra on its southern bank and Chochar on the northern. Therefore, the survival of the relic *stūpas* in question is doubtful. The identification of the ancient Buddhist site of Chochar with the city of Vaishali of the Rāmāyaṇa is not improbable. H.C. Law's¹⁴ identification of Svetaपुरa with the village of Sedaka, Setaka or Desaka in the Suhma Janapada is definitely wrong. The Chinese accounts of Hsiao-tsang and his biographer Hsuei-li is very clear on this point and the location of Svetaपुरa (current Buddhapura) cannot be placed in the Suhma Janapada (ancient Rāgha) in south-west Bengal. As we have seen above the place was located at a distance of 90 *li* (about 15 miles) to the south of Fei-tse-li (or Vaishali)¹⁵ modern Basethi in the Vaishali district and 30 *li* (or 5 miles) to the north of the Ganges, therefore the existence of the city and the monastery in question at Hajipur cannot be ruled out. The entire area around Hajipur is spotted with mounds, ruins of Buddhist monasteries and old temples. Cunningham¹⁶ (1880-81) traced the ruins of an old temple called Marahi at a distance of two miles to the north of Hajipur and Pandey (1918-19) discovered the remains of another fragments of stone railings bearing the representation of lotus medallions on

14 Law, 1937, p. 60. The Suhma Janapada of the *Mahabharata* is the same as Suahka of the Pāli texts. It has been identified with ancient Rāgha in South-West-Bengal. See Nilakanta, *Com. on Mbh.*, ii, 30, 16; cf. Majumdar, *op. cit.*, pp. 9 ff.; Matsushiro, *Monastery II*, 1252. The Suhma country has been identified by many scholars with the present Hooghly District in West Bengal (B. D. Banerji in *JASB*, 1909, pp. 243ff; According to D. C. Sircar, the country lay on both banks of the Ajay river in the modern Bardhaman region of south West Bengal (see Sircar, *Geo. An. Med. India*, p. 217).

15 Watlett, *loc. cit.* For the identification of Svetaपुरa see also *Com. Hist. Bh.*, Vol. I, pt. I, p. 960; Pull, *Ant. Rem. Bh.*, p. 138.

16 Cunningham, *ASI*, Vol. XVI, pp. 56; Pandey, *ASI. AR*, 1918-19, p. 45; cf. Pull, *loc. cit.*

one side and figure of Kalāśa resembling the Mathurā school of Art on the other, at Jhama (within the municipal limit of the town). The extensive ruins of an old fort covering an area of about 360 bighas of land along with the river Gopdala believed to have been built by Hājī-Ilyās-Shāh (1345-1358 A.D.) founder of the modern Hajipur is standing on the ruins of an old city and the mosque called Jamī Maṣīd is apparently built on the site of an old temple and the material taken from the same temple. The discovery of a hoard of the Gupta gold coins from the bazar area of Hajipur also proves that it was an important place during the Gupta period.

The site of Chechar complex may be identified with the ancient Vajjās villages of Kocīgāma,¹⁷ Nādikā¹⁸ (or Jānikā) and Ukkāśchela or Ukkāśchā¹⁹ known from the Buddhist sources. These were important Buddhist centres and were located on the main trade-route of Uttarāpatha running from Rājagṛha or Śrāvastī and Pratiṣṭhāna. We find traders of Rājagṛha going to Roraka (or Rorava) by the same route. The place was also connected with the cities of Candak and Tāmraliptā through water route. Tāmraliptā was an important port and was connected with Suvarṇadvīpa through sea route. The travellers and traders of China had to change their ship at Tāmraliptā.

17 The ancient village of Kocīgāma was situated to the north of the Ganges in between the Magadhan village of Pāṭaligrāma and the Vajjian village of Nādikā on the way between Rājagṛha and Vaiśālī.

18 According to the Mahāparinibbāna-Sūtra, the village of Nādikā or Nādikā or Jānikā was situated between Kocīgāma and Vaiśālī. Advanīśa calls it Nādikā (*Buddhacharita*, 22.13). This was the village of the people called Jānikas (see Śālistambakāśī, Vol. II, p. 56). Rahul Santhiriyayana wrongly identifies the Nādikā with the modern Jathariya or Jathariya and the village of district and also with Raut Pargana in the old Mutzafarpur district of north Bihar (see *Buddhacharya*, p. 49); *Mahāparinibbāna*, (Hindi tr.), p. 127).

19 According to Ukkāśchela-kāṇḍa of Saṅghasamāhita, the village of Ukkāśchela was situated on the northern bank of the Ganges on the Rājagṛha-Vaiśālī route (see J. Thomas, *The Life of the Buddha*, pp. 140); Rahul Santhiriyayana locates it somewhere in between Sonapur and Hajipur (*Mahāparinibbāna* (Hindi tr.), p. 116).

[illegible][illegible]

20 Woodward thinks that the village of Nibak referred to by Hsiao-tung was the same as Nibak (see BCF, Vol. II, p. 2). According to Hsiao-tung the village of Nibak was situated on the Ganges between Wabai and Pipalpur, cf. Woodward, *op. cit.*, p. 241.

Gijjhakūṭa which was constructed for him by the inhabitants of the same village during his first visit and was later developed into a monastery.²¹ The village of Nāḍikā was situated in between Kōṭigrama and Vaiśālī and was inhabited by the people called Jūāyikā and therefore it was known as Jūāyikā (जुआयिका नगरम्). The village of Jūāyikā was also called as Nāḍikā (नडिका नगरम्) as it was situated by the side of a tank called Nāḍikā (नडिका तटं नाम निगम). It is worthy of note that the village of Nāḍikā was an important centre of the Buddhists during the life time of the Buddha and was visited by him on many occasions. The śāgahar like Anuraddha, Kicchilā, Nandiyā and Ānanda had also visited the village with the Buddha and had stayed there.

In the Gijjhakūṭa Sutta of Saṃyuttanikāya, we find Ānanda and Buddha enjoying the beautiful surroundings of the Gijjhakūṭa Vihāra of Nāḍikā. The Upāsaka like Aśoka, Kāṇḍa, Nigama, Kāṭimā, Tattā, Sāmaṇa, Bhadda and Suddhadda were living in the village and the Buddha delivered the teachings of Chula-Gopālaka-Sūta and many other Sūtas of Anguttaranikāya while living in the same village.²² The village of Nāḍikā had a beautiful forest of the Śāla trees (Śālavana) called Gāṅgāśālavana (Gaṅgaśālavana) and the Buddha had visited and stayed there with the bhikkhus.

The third Vajjian village which may be identified with the present site of Chorchar complex was Ukkachela or Ukkachellā. It was situated just on the northern bank of the Ganges and was on the way between Rājagṛha (modern Rajgir) and Vaiśālī (modern Basethi in the Vaishali district). It was one of the favourite places of Buddha and his great disciples Sāriputra and Maṇḍipāyāna. The Chula-Gopālaka-Sūta of Anguttaranikāya and Chula-Sūta of Saṃyuttanikāya was preached by Buddha himself and the teachings the mādāka-sūta was imparted to a parivrajaka named Samapāla by Sāriputra while staying in the same village. Buddha had visited Ukkachela sometime after the death of Sāriputra and Maṇḍipāyāna.

21. Pāpachandani, Vol. I, p. 424.

22. Anguttaranikāya, Vol. III, p. 306; IV, p. 316 and 320. The Śālavana called Gāṅgāśālavana was situated close to the village of Nāḍikā and it was always frequented by Buddhist bhikkhus and Śālavanas. The Gāṅgāśālavana was named after a Śāla-tree which was in the middle of the forest and its two branches looking like the two horns of a cow (see Majjhimanikāya (Hindi tr.) pp. 121 and 132).

and we find him on the sandy bank of the Ganges in the same village recalling the memory of his deceased disciples (Śāriputra and Maudgalyāyana). Buddha had gone to this village from Śrāvastī when the news of the nirvāṇa of his *apra-brāhmar* Śāriputra and Maudgalyāyana was given to him by Chetivaraṇa, *nandana* (younger brother of Śāriputra). From Ukkāschela, Buddha had gone to Rājagṛha and had constructed a *chaitya* at the gate of Venuvana in the memory of Maudgalyāyana. We know from the Ukkāschela-Jāma of Saṃjottarā-Hya that Buddha had gone again to Ukkāschela from Rājagṛha and had delivered the secrets of the nirvāṇa of his great disciples Śāriputra and Maudgalyāyana, Ukkāschela was very favourite place for the Buddha and his disciples.

Thus we have seen that the extensive archaeological remains of Chechar complex represent the ancient sites of the Vajjian villages of Koṭṭigāma, Nāḍikā and Ukkāschela (or Ukkāschela) of the time of the Buddha which later developed into an urban *senāsikā* (or township) and was in flourishing condition during the Maurya, Śuṅga, Kūṣāṇa and the Gupta periods. The ancient city (of Chechar) was an important centre of the religious and political activities and had trade relations with East and West and the important towns and cities of the country.

Didiragatīja (in Patna city) was an important place in the Pāṭaligrāma (Pataliputra) on the Ganges (during the life time of the Buddha and also probably in the later period) and while travelling through Rājagṛha-Nālanda Pāṭaligrāma-Koṭṭigāma Nāḍikā-Vaiśālī route one had to get the boat from Didiragatīja ghāṭa (at Pāṭaligrāma) to cross the Ganges. Rājagṛha-Ukkāschela-Vaiśālī route was located further to the east in between Patna city and Patwah somewhere near the present Patna city-Chechar route. From both the above routes, the boats had to move with the favourable current of the Ganges towards north-east direction to reach the northern bank somewhere to the east of Bājpur in the vicinity of present Chechar (ancient Koṭṭigāma-Nāḍikā and Ukkāschela).

The Raghupur Dighra which is situated in the middle of the Ganges to the south of Chechar and to the east of Patna city (ancient Pataliputra) formed the part of south Bihar and seems to have been separated from land

by the flood waters of the Sena, Pampon and Ganges. The exploration in this area is expected to throw welcome light on the present problem and the ancient history of Ishur.

The discovery of a seated terracotta figure of Bodhi (about 1' high) from the brick ruins in the village of Rajapur (two kilometres to the east of Chaschar) and three stone images (of about 11th-12th century A.D.) of the seated Bodhi in *Bhūmipada* would now installed in the modern temple at the Chaschar *phān* on the Ganges suggests that the place continued to be of some importance for the Buddhists all the Pala-Sena period.

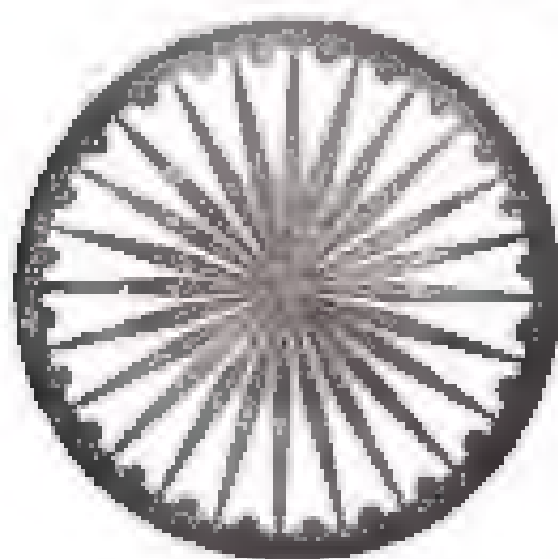
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